

CHAPTER 4

Plan Framework

Introduction

The Plan Framework Map provides an overview of the main ideas and themes addressed in the Plan. A copy of the Plan Framework Map is located at the end of this chapter. The map illustrates the City’s general pattern of development and highlights areas where some degree of change is encouraged or anticipated. Planning policies are provided in this chapter for each area identified on the Framework Map. Table 4.1 lists the areas on the framework map and indicates the guiding plan policies for each.

Table 4.1: Framework and Plan Policies

Framework	Guiding Plan Policies
City Gateways	Strengthening the City's image and attractiveness by improving entries.
Resource Conservation Areas	Protecting parks and natural resources.
Revitalization Areas	Encouraging reinvestment and sensitive redevelopment in older commercial districts.
Corridor Study Areas	Improving the conditions, character, and quality of primary travel corridors.
Neighborhood Conservation Areas	Improving the quality of life in the City's mature neighborhoods.
Planned Development Areas	Encouraging coordinated planning for large tracts of vacant, developable land.
Business/Technology & Employment Areas	Maximizing the use and attractiveness of existing and emerging employment districts.
Scenic Conservation Areas	Conserving the scenic quality of Boonsboro Road, the Lynchburg Expressway, Graves Mill Road, and US Route 460 (future US Route 29 Bypass).

The chapters following this one provide the detailed goals, objectives, and strategies that will guide the City in the implementation of the framework plan policies in this chapter.

Context & Recommendations

City Gateways

The Framework Map identifies the City’s major and minor gateways—places where the regional road network crosses a City boundary. These gateways serve as the community’s front door, establishing first impressions and reinforcing images and perceptions of Lynchburg’s quality of life and vitality.

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The City should complete an evaluation of the visual quality and entry experience at each of the gateways and identify appropriate improvements, including the installation of updated entry signage, landscape improvements, and screening of unsightly views. Gateway improvement plans should be developed in collaboration with VDOT, neighborhood and business groups, and nearby property owners. The plans should be coordinated with the signage and wayfinding system proposed in the Downtown & Riverfront Master Plan 2000 and described in Chapter 8. The success of the City's LEAF program serves as a model for the gateway improvement program.



New welcome sign.

A description of the City's major and minor gateways follows:

Major Gateways

Major gateways have been designated in locations where heavily traveled, typically four-lane roads cross from surrounding counties into the City. Major gateways include:

- The John Lynch Memorial Bridge
- US Route 29 Bypass (existing) at the Carter Glass Memorial Bridge
- US Route 29 Bypass (future)/US Route 460 Interchange in the Tyreeanna/Pleasant Valley neighborhood
- Campbell Avenue /US Route 460 Interchange
- US Route 460 /US Route 501 Interchange (near River Ridge Mall)
- Wards Road and the US Route 460/US Route 29 Interchange (near the Airport)
- Boonsboro Road
- Timberlake Road
- Lakeside Drive and the Lakeside Drive/Lynchburg Expressway Interchange (future)

The John Lynch Memorial Bridge, which affords an unparalleled panoramic view of the City's skyline and provides direct access to downtown, major visitor destinations, historic sites, and visitor support services, is identified as the City's preferred entry into the Downtown area for traffic from the north. Directing

visitors to this entry presents certain challenges, especially given the changes in regional circulation anticipated once the Madison Heights Bypass is complete. The City will need to work closely with VDOT and Amherst County to ensure that first time and repeat visitors are directed to John Lynch Memorial Bridge.

Minor Gateways

Minor gateways have been designated in locations where secondary (typically two-lane) roads cross City boundaries. Minor Gateways include:

- Candler's Mountain Road
- Leesville Road
- Graves Mill Road
- Coffee Road
- Enterprise Drive
- Trents Ferry Road

General Plan Recommendations and Interim Policies for All Gateways

Goals, objectives, and strategies to guide the improvement of the City's gateways are included in Chapter 6, Design, Character & Quality.

Prior to the development and implementation of the recommended gateway improvement plans, the City will use the following as interim policies with regard to changes proposed in Gateway areas:

- If a property in a gateway area is proposed for rezoning, the City will seek proffers that ensure high aesthetic quality of development and that set aside land for gateway features.
- If a conditional use is proposed at a City gateway, the City will impose conditions to ensure high aesthetic quality for the proposed use or development.
- During the review of site plans, the City will suggest design changes that enhance the aesthetic quality of development proposed at gateways.
- Public projects will be designed to enhance gateways. When VDOT plans road projects, the City will seek assistance in obtaining land and landscape improvements at gateways.
- When preparing Corridor Studies, as described later in this chapter, the City will include gateway improvement plans.

Resource Conservation Areas

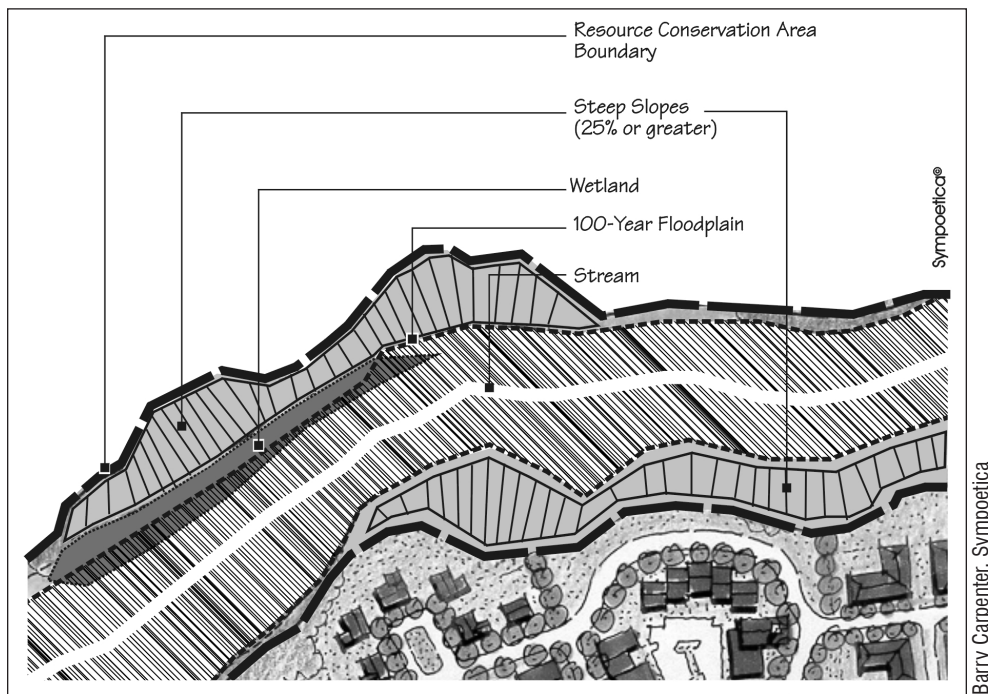
Resource Conservation Areas, illustrated in green on the Framework Map, include public parklands, rivers, streams, wetlands, floodplains, and steep slopes (25 percent or greater) adjacent to wetlands and floodplains. These areas serve a range of important functions—wildlife habitat, natural stormwater control, active and passive recreation—and are counted among the City's primary assets. The conservation of these environmentally sensitive areas is one of the primary goals of the Plan.

Like other communities in Virginia's Piedmont region, rivers, stream valleys, and hillsides have had a profound influence on the development of the City's form.

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The City was founded at a convenient crossing along the James River, the downtown was built on high ground above the floodplain, and later development extended outward from the core along roads following the ridge lines—Rivermont Avenue, Fort Avenue, and Campbell Avenue. Neighborhoods grew up on the high ground, and railroads—and later highways—followed the contours in the lowlands.

As the City reaches buildout, pressure to develop adjacent to and within sensitive areas will increase. To ensure that the natural function and beauty of the City's remaining natural areas are conserved, the City should carefully evaluate development proposals and employ a range of measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts.



Illustrative Diagram, Resource Conservation Area.

General Plan Recommendations and Interim Policies for All Resource Conservation Areas

Goals, objectives, and strategies for Resource Conservation Areas are included in Chapter 5, Citywide Land Use & Development; Chapter 12, Natural Systems; and Chapter 13, Parks & Recreation. Note that on the Future Land Use Map presented in Chapter 5, public parks are called out separately from stream valley and mountain slope Resource Conservation Areas, though from a broad policy standpoint, they are all natural resource areas to be conserved.

The City will use the following as interim policies with regard to changes proposed in Resource Conservation Areas until detailed regulations and/or policies for their protection are developed:

- If a property including a Resource Conservation Area is proposed for rezoning, the City will ask that the Resource Conservation Area, as described in more detail in Chapter 5, be shown on the submitted schematic site plan and will seek proffers that protect a reasonable area for resource conservation. Protection means maintenance of the natural topographic and vegetative conditions with limitations on most development as further described in Chapter 5.
- If a conditional use is proposed on a property that includes a Resource Conservation Area, the City will impose conditions to protect a reasonable area for resource conservation.
- During the review of site plans, the City will suggest changes that would protect Resource Conservation Areas.
- Public projects will be designed to protect Resource Conservation Areas to the maximum extent possible.
- When preparing Revitalization Areas Plans, Corridor Studies, and Neighborhood Conservation Area Plans as described later in this chapter, the City will include measures to protect Resource Conservation Areas.

Revitalization Areas

A number of the City's older commercial areas have experienced a decline in vitality, following patterns of change that have afflicted older commercial areas in many cities across Virginia and the country. These commercial areas include downtown, the City's historic mercantile center, as well as several retail areas serving the City's inner ring of older neighborhoods. The Plan Framework Map targets these areas for revitalization.

Revitalization is important for many reasons and meets many City goals, including:

- Restoring historic mercantile centers;
- Eliminating vacancy and blight;
- Providing retail service and employment opportunities in close proximity to inner City neighborhoods;
- Taking advantage of the City's existing infrastructure;
- Reusing and recycling existing buildings, including important historic buildings; and
- Improving the City's image.

Identified Revitalization Areas should be studied to determine ways to meet the goals listed above.

Recommendations in Revitalization Area Plans should address such issues as:

- The appropriate mix and location of uses based on market potential and compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods;
- Adaptive reuse of historic and other quality buildings;
- The design quality of buildings and spaces—design guidelines;
- Streetscape and façade improvements;
- Pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular circulation;
- Redevelopment opportunities;
- The incorporation of public parks, public facilities, and civic uses; and
- Public investments and incentives to spur revitalization.

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Rendering of Ninth Street in the future.

General Plan Recommendations and Interim Policies for All Revitalization Areas

Goals, objectives, and strategies to guide land use and public investment decisions for Revitalization Areas are included in Chapter 5, Citywide Land Use & Development, and in Chapter 6, Design, Character & Quality.

The City will use the following as interim policies with regard to changes proposed in Revitalization Areas until Revitalization Area Plans are completed:

- The City should refrain from expanding business and industrial zoning in these areas, unless such expansion would support a comprehensive private sector revitalization effort meeting the goals of this Comprehensive Plan or would support appropriate adaptive reuse of an historic building.
- The City will entertain proposals for the addition or improvement of residential uses in and around revitalization areas to provide more customers for the businesses there. Such proposals should support neighborhood conservation goals.
- The City will entertain adaptive reuse proposals for historic buildings along Fifth and Twelfth Street that preserve the historic character of the buildings. This policy shall apply to the old factory buildings on Twelfth Street that do not currently have an historic designation.
- The City will entertain mixed use and/or TND redevelopment proposals for the Plaza/Midtown Area.
- Road improvement plans must consider not only the movement of through traffic, but also the movement of vehicles and pedestrians within these Revitalization Areas. Road improvements should not damage or further reduce community cohesion and aesthetic qualities.

The Plan Framework Map identifies four revitalization areas. They were selected based on such factors as high vacancy rates, building obsolescence, proximity to residential areas underserved by retail, high traffic impacts, high levels of land use conflict, historic character, and/or poor image.

They include:

- Downtown & Riverfront
- Plaza/Midtown
- Fifth Street
- Twelfth Street

Downtown and Riverfront Revitalization Area

The City's Downtown and Riverfront area is highlighted as a special area of focus for the Plan. Long recognized as the heart of the City and the region, the Downtown has lost its former luster as the City's primary retail and employment center. The James River was the focus of early mercantile, industrial, and transportation activities, but is no longer. In many locations it is separated from the City by rail lines, old industrial buildings, and waste disposal sites. Lynchburg recognized the need for revitalization of the Downtown and Riverfront when it commissioned Sasaki Associates to develop a master plan for the area. This plan, adopted by City Council in May 2001, is the revitalization plan for the Downtown and Riverfront and is incorporated in this Comprehensive Plan by reference. Chapter 8, The Downtown & Riverfront Master Plan 2000, summarizes the recommendations of this revitalization plan.

Plaza/Midtown Revitalization Area

As with other early suburban shopping and commercial destinations around the country, the Plaza/Midtown area is struggling to maintain its identity as a retail, office, and commercial destination in the Lynchburg region. Once a regional magnet for shoppers, The Plaza has been overshadowed by newer retail developments at the City's edge, including River Ridge Mall and the retail uses along Candler's Mountain Road, Wards Road, and Timberlake Road. Further diminishing the area's position as a destination and magnet for investment is the generally haphazard mix of land uses surrounding The Plaza. Over time, residential areas in close proximity to The Plaza—west of Memorial Avenue between Allegheny Avenue and Wadsworth Street and along Oakley Street—were rezoned to permit general business uses, and subsequently, many but not all of the existing houses have been converted for a wide range of business uses.

The Plaza/Midtown area presents a significant opportunity for reinvestment and redevelopment into an integrated in-town mixed use community with a commercial core, medium to high density housing, and professional offices. The area already includes or is proximate to many activity attractors that this proposed

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mixed use community could build upon, including the City's main library, the City's main bus transfer center, E.C. Glass High School, and the Lynchburg General Hospital. The new Crosstown Connector road project will make Plaza/Midtown easily accessible by car to many areas of the City, and the Blackwater Creek Trail makes it accessible to bicyclists and pedestrians as well. The Blackwater Creek Natural Area offers a unique natural amenity for the area.

Plaza/Midtown offers an excellent opportunity to apply Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) principles in order to create the integrated mixed use community envisioned. These principles are articulated in the City's Traditional Neighborhood Development Ordinance:

- 1) The design of the neighborhood allows residents to work, shop, and carry out many of life's other activities within the neighborhood.
- 2) A mix of land uses is provided. The proximity of uses allows residents to walk, ride a bicycle, or take transit for many trips between home, work, shopping, and school.
- 3) A variety of housing types is provided at a range of densities, types (multifamily, townhouse, and single family), and costs. Neighborhoods are heterogeneous mixes of residences in close proximity to commercial and employment uses.
- 4) The neighborhood includes a retail, office, employment, and/or entertainment core to provide economic and social vitality, as well as a major focus and meeting place in the community.
- 5) The circulation system serves many modes of transportation and provides choices for alternative transportation routes. Streets, alleys, and pedestrian and bike paths connect to the surrounding area. Streets and alleys generally follow a grid pattern to provide these route choices and connections. Traffic calming techniques may be used to reduce vehicle speed and increase pedestrian and bicycle safety.
- 6) The overall intensity of development is designed to be high enough to support transit service.
- 7) A system of parks; open spaces; and civic, public, and institutional uses is included to create a high quality of life and civic identity for the community.
- 8) The cluster concept is embraced so as to concentrate development in environmentally suitable areas and to preserve and protect important environmental and cultural resources.

Plaza/Midtown already contains some of the civic uses and transportation resources desired in a TND. New residential and office uses need to be added and retail areas redeveloped in order to achieve a TND balance of uses. The addition of new residential areas is essential to the revitalization of retail and should be a focus of City revitalization efforts. The design and layout of the area also need to be reworked to ensure the integration of uses and connected street network desired in TNDs.

The Revitalization Plan for Plaza/Midtown should address the following, in addition to the general recommendations and interim policies listed above for all revitalization areas:

- Feasibility of redevelopment of The Plaza Shopping Center as a pedestrian and transit-oriented retail core for the area;
- Addition of residential uses in and around the Plaza and along the Atherton and Tate Springs road extensions;
- Addition of office uses with proximity to the hospital;
- Site and building design to take advantage of the excellent views of the Blue Ridge Mountains from The Plaza site;

- Redevelopment or aesthetic improvements to the strip commercial along Memorial Avenue; and
- Incorporation of TND principles in the design of the area.

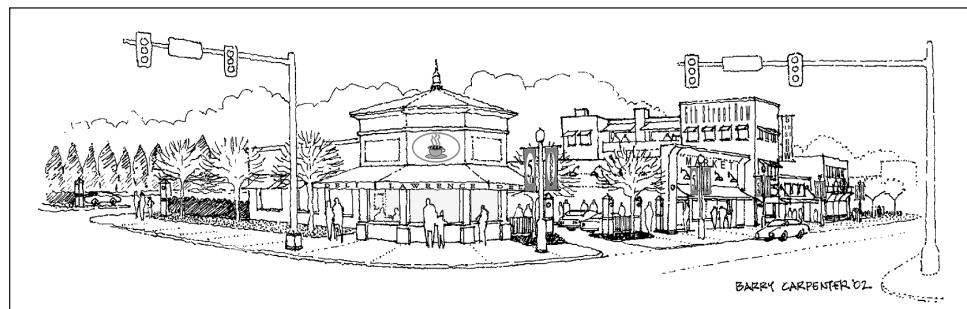
Fifth Street Revitalization Area

Fifth Street is one of the City's older travel corridors that connects the traditional inner City neighborhoods to the Downtown. In its early days, it was the site of several hotels and taverns. The buildings that housed the Western Hotel/Joseph Nichols Tavern and the Kentucky Hotel are still present today. Directly to the north is one of the City's historic neighborhoods, Garland Hill; the historic Old City Cemetery is located one block to the north on Fourth Street.

Fifth Street once contained a mix of residences and commercial uses on small lots, but many of the original houses have been demolished or redeveloped into commercial uses, making Fifth Street a primarily commercial corridor today. Frontage lots along the entire corridor are zoned B-5, General Business, which permits the widest variety of uses of all the City's business zones. The small lot sizes on Fifth Street have limited its commercial success. A number of buildings are vacant, in poor condition, or generally unattractive. Fifth Street is a major travel route with three lanes (two westbound, one eastbound) and narrow sidewalks adjacent to the street. Traffic congestion is a problem, and over time there have been proposals to widen Fifth Street. The City's current policy is not to widen the street.

A Revitalization Plan for Fifth Street should consider the following, in addition to the general recommendations and interim policies listed above for all revitalization areas:

- Transportation management techniques as alternatives to street widening;
- In coordination with the efforts of the Fifth Street Community Development Corporation (CDC), measures to encourage housing rehabilitation and compatible residential infill in close proximity to the corridor.



Barry Carpenter, Sympoetica

Illustrative Revitalization Concept, Fifth Street Corridor/Market Block.

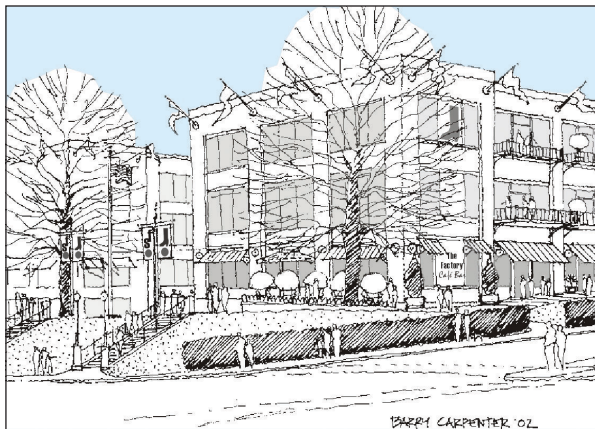
Plan Framework**Twelfth Street Revitalization Area**

Like Fifth Street, Twelfth Street is an older travel route that connects the traditional inner City neighborhoods to the Downtown. However, unlike Fifth Street, Twelfth was one of the City's employment areas. A number of old industrial buildings line the street, many of them formerly Craddock Terry Shoe factories. Many of these former factories are now vacant, though they are architecturally attractive. Four historic districts touch or are located within one block of Twelfth Street, including the Lower Basin, Court House Hill, Diamond Hill, and Federal Hill. Two elegant City schools are also found along Twelfth, Dunbar Middle School and Payne Elementary School, as well as the Hunton YMCA. A small landscaped triangular park is found at the intersection of Twelfth and Grace Streets.

Over time a number of lots along Twelfth have developed into small commercial uses, many of them auto service shops. The Twelfth Street corridor can meet just about any auto repair, auto service, and auto parts sales needs that a citizen might have. Twelfth Street is not a major commuter/travel route and has not been proposed for widening.

A Revitalization Plan for Twelfth Street should consider the following, in addition to the general recommendations and interim policies listed above for all revitalization areas:

- The variable character of this corridor and whether different sections of the corridor should be targeted for different treatments and strategies;
- Whether the auto service function of Twelfth Street is viable and should be supported or whether its vitality is fading and other areas might be more appropriate for such uses;
- Adaptive reuse of the old factory buildings into residential, mixed retail/residential, institutional, educational, and/or arts uses.
- The pending location of the new federal courthouse and post office on 12th Street.



**Illustrative Revitalization Concept,
Twelfth Street Corridor/The Shoe
Factory Condominiums.**

Barry Carpenter, Sympoetica

Corridor Study Areas

The Plan Framework Map highlights the City's primary commercial and mixed use corridors. As important local and regional travel routes and commercial destinations, these areas strongly influence the City's accessibility, attractiveness, and economic vitality.

For each Corridor Study Area, the Plan recommends the completion of studies to analyze existing conditions and uses; to evaluate development, redevelopment, design, and conservation scenarios; and to identify improvement strategies.

These studies will address a range of issues, including:

- Land use and design quality
- Vehicle and pedestrian circulation
- Development, redevelopment, and reuse opportunities
- Conservation of special features
- Provision of utilities and public facilities

General Plan Recommendations and Interim Policies for All Corridor Study Areas

Goals, objectives, and strategies to guide land use and public investment decisions for Corridor Study Areas are included in Chapter 5, Citywide Land Use & Development; in Chapter 6, Design, Character & Quality; in Chapter 9, Commercial & Employment Districts; and in Chapter 14, Transportation.

The City will use the following as interim policies with regard to changes proposed in Corridor Study Areas until the studies are completed:

- The City should refrain from expanding business zoning in these corridors that would result in further strip commercial development.
- The City will promote conversion of underperforming retail space to employment space, if the resulting traffic and quality of building improvements does not adversely affect adjacent and nearby residential areas.
- The City will entertain proposals to add residential zoning to the corridors for residential developments that are well-buffered from the primary road and are connected by local streets and pedestrian paths to existing commercial areas.
- The City will entertain mixed use and/or TND development/redevelopment proposals along the corridors.
- Road improvement plans should consider not only the movement of through traffic, but also the movement of pedestrians and bicyclists. Streetscape improvements should be included in all road construction plans.

Corridor Study Areas, listed in general order of priority for future planning, are described below:

Crosstown Corridor Study Area

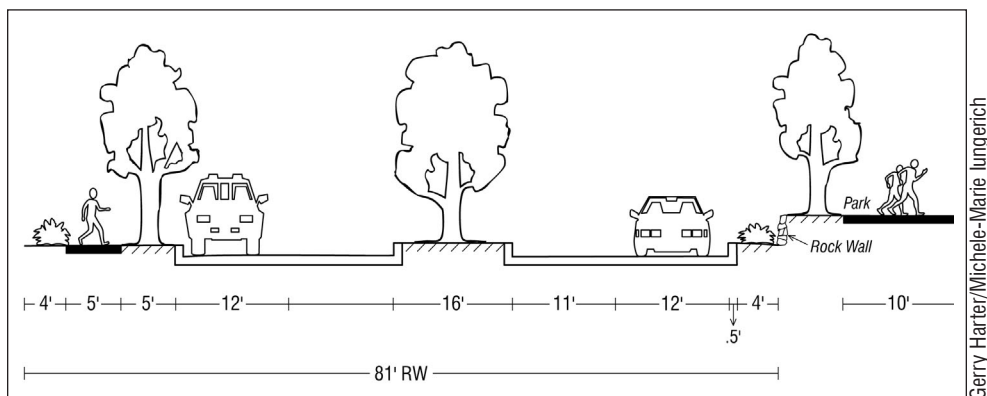
The Crosstown Corridor Study Area begins on Kemper Street at US Route 29, extends west along Kemper Street to Park Avenue, continues along Park to Lakeside Drive, and follows Lakeside Drive to the Lynchburg Expressway and the

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City boundary. Currently, the City has plans for widening Kemper Street, Park Avenue, and Lakeside Drive to create a new four-lane arterial road known as the Crosstown Connector. The City will work with VDOT to ensure that designs for the Crosstown Connector will respect the integrity of park property and the surrounding neighborhoods, as well as the aesthetics of the historic area through which the Connector passes.

Once planned improvements are complete, the road will play a critical role in the region's transportation system, providing improved access to Lynchburg General Hospital, Kemper Street Station, and The Plaza Shopping Center, as well as improving connections between the Downtown and suburban residential and employment districts. The improvements will also result in increases in traffic flow—up to 21,000 vehicles per day between the US Route 29 Bypass and Old Forest Road and 42,000 vehicles per day between Old Forest Road and the Lynchburg Expressway.

The improved access and jump in traffic volumes will increase the attractiveness of the corridor for new development and redevelopment, thus providing opportunities for the City to encourage the creation of high quality destinations for shopping, working, and living. Studies of the area should identify sites appropriate for development, redevelopment, or conservation and strategies to encourage safe, attractive, pedestrian-friendly development, as well as a more attractive roadside environment.



Illustrative, street profile showing a design for the Crosstown Connector.

Wards Road/Candlers Mountain Corridor Study Area

The Wards Road/Candlers Mountain Corridor Study Area encompasses the commercial uses along Wards Road and Candlers Mountain Road, as well as the retail and hotel developments clustered around the intersection of the US Route 29 Bypass, the east end of the Lynchburg Expressway, and US Route 460. This area includes several of the region's major retail centers, including the River Ridge Mall, Candlers Station, and the "big box" commercial uses along Wards Road.

The neighborhood in the triangular area between the northern end of Wards Road and the southern end of Fort Avenue (Edgewood/Edinboro) is of special concern. Residents of this neighborhood have complained about the impacts resulting from their location between two busy commercial corridors, including cut-through traffic and litter. Piecemeal zoning changes have increased the number of incompatible uses in the area that threaten the residential character of the neighborhood.

Future planning for this area should focus on:

- Improving traffic circulation (plans to alleviate congestion along Candler's Mountain Road by constructing a new interchange at the Expressway and adding travel lanes are included in the current regional transportation plan);
- Assessing the redevelopment potential of underutilized sites, especially the property between Candler's Mountain Road and the Norfolk Southern railroad tracks;
- Retrofitting existing development to provide for safe pedestrian connections, transit access, and cross-parcel vehicular circulation;
- Enhancing the design quality of private development; and
- Increasing the attractiveness of roadways and rights-of-way through landscaping and screening.

Campbell Avenue Corridor Study Area

Beginning at the intersection of Campbell Avenue and Kelly Street, the Campbell Avenue Corridor Study Area continues east along Campbell Avenue to Florida Avenue. As one of the City's older commercial strips, development along Campbell Avenue ranges from auto-oriented commercial uses, such as gas stations and fast food outlets, to neighborhood-oriented markets and commercial services, to single family and multifamily housing.

While the corridor is expected to serve as an important entrance to the City from the Lynchburg Bypass and US Route 460, narrow lane widths, the lack of crosswalks, and multiple curbcuts present safety challenges. The overall design quality needs improvement. Minimal landscaping and modest buildings, along with the presence of overhead utilities, industrial uses, billboards, and commercial signs, make this one of the City's least inviting entries.

Planning for the future of the Campbell Avenue corridor should consider:

- Gateway landscaping improvements at the interchange with US Route 460;
- Strategies to calm or channel traffic, especially in areas where pedestrian crossings are concentrated, for example, near the recreation center and the community markets;
- Retrofitting existing development to provide for safe pedestrian connections, transit access, and cross-parcel vehicular circulation;
- Addressing issues related to the conversion of existing single family houses with frontage on Campbell Avenue to commercial use;
- Limiting the extension of strip commercial development along the corridor;
- Clustering neighborhood-serving commercial uses at key intersections and improving pedestrian access;

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- Encouraging design improvements to existing commercial buildings and signs; and
- Increasing the attractiveness of roadways and rights-of-way through landscaping and screening.

Boonsboro Road Corridor Study Area

The Boonsboro Road Corridor Study Area encompasses lands with frontage along Boonsboro Road from Virginia Episcopal School Road to the City boundary near Coffee Road. Boonsboro Road, designated a major collector in the transportation network, provides an important connection between the residential and commercial uses in the northwest quadrant of the City and Rivermont Avenue to the east and the Lynchburg Expressway to the south.

Residential uses, ranging from apartments and attached houses to large-lot single family houses, are the dominant use in the corridor with a few concentrations of community-serving commercial and service uses. Many commercial developments are of particularly high quality, incorporating building and landscape designs that complement the character and scale of the area. Several segments of the corridor retain a scenic, almost rural, character, with mature tree canopies, forested-edge conditions along road frontages, and deep building setbacks.

Future planning for this corridor should include:

- Assessments of the development potential of vacant and underdeveloped sites and the preparation of development guidelines;
- Documentation and conservation of sensitive natural and scenic qualities, including mature trees and forested areas;
- Strategies to calm or channel traffic, especially in areas where pedestrian crossings are concentrated;
- Creating village centers by clustering housing and commercial uses in key locations and improving public spaces and pedestrian accessibility; and
- Retrofitting existing development to provide for safe pedestrian connections, transit access, and cross-parcel vehicular circulation.

Old Forest Road Corridor Study Area

The Old Forest Corridor Study Area begins at the intersection of Old Forest and Linkhorne Roads and continues west along Old Forest Road to Camp Avenue. Uses along Old Forest include retail and office uses and medium density residential housing. Old Forest Road provides access to several large residential subdivisions including Blue Ridge Farms and Woodbine Village.

This area shares similar challenges with other older suburban commercial streets in the City—pedestrian accessibility is lacking, uses are segregated, minimal landscaping exists, and large signs, overhead utilities, and barren parking lots diminish visual quality. Signs of disinvestment—vacant storefronts and deferred building maintenance, for example—are becoming evident.

Planning for the future of the corridor should consider:

- Strategies to calm or channel traffic, especially in areas where pedestrian crossings are concentrated or where connections with residential areas may be improved;
- Retrofitting existing development to provide for safe pedestrian connections, transit access, and cross-parcel vehicular circulation;
- Assessing opportunities for the reuse or redevelopment of underperforming commercial centers and uses;
- Creating village or neighborhood centers by clustering housing and commercial uses in key locations and improving public spaces and pedestrian accessibility;
- Encouraging design improvements to existing commercial buildings and signs; and
- Increasing the attractiveness of roadways and rights-of-way through landscaping and screening.

Fort Avenue Corridor Study Area

The Fort Avenue Corridor Study Area begins at the intersection of Fort and Campbell Avenues and extends west along Fort Avenue, ending at the Lynchburg Expressway. The section of Fort Avenue between the Lynchburg Expressway and the intersection of Wards Road is classified as an arterial; the remainder of Fort Avenue, also known as US Route 29 Business, serves as a major collector.

Over the past 20 years, the character of this corridor has changed substantially. As traffic has increased, uses have shifted from single family to a mix of single family, retail, office, and medium density residential. While residential remains the predominant use between Campbell Avenue and Johnson Road, a mix of commercial and office uses, much of it located in converted single family homes, exists further south. The shift in use along the southern segment of the corridor has occurred in ad hoc manner, resulting in multiple curbcuts, limited parking, and little or no direct vehicular or pedestrian connections between uses.

Planning for the future of the corridor should consider:

- Strategies to calm traffic, especially in areas where multiple curbcuts exist and pedestrian crossings are concentrated;
- Retrofitting existing development to provide for safe pedestrian connections, transit access, and cross-parcel vehicular circulation;
- The feasibility of reverting to two lanes of traffic with on-street parking in areas with residential frontage;
- Limiting future conversion of single family houses to commercial use and assessing opportunities for lot consolidation and redevelopment in areas currently zoned for commercial use; and
- Encouraging design improvements to existing commercial buildings and signs.

Timberlake Road Corridor Study Area

The Timberlake Road Corridor Study Area starts at the intersection of Timberlake Road and US Route 460 and continues west along Timberlake Road to the City boundary. Timberlake Road, an arterial roadway, is lined with auto-oriented

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commercial uses with office, single, and multifamily uses present in a few areas. Several large subdivisions of single family houses, including Richland Hills and Windsor Hills, are located north and south of the corridor.

Timberlake Road has developed over the years as a conventional commercial strip serving suburban areas in the City and counties. As with other commercial strips in the City, traffic volumes and travel speeds are relatively high along main roads; pedestrian accessibility is lacking; uses are segregated; minimal landscaping exists; and large signs, overhead utilities, and barren parking lots diminish visual quality.

Perhaps more so than other auto-oriented commercial areas in the City, vacancy and deferred building maintenance are issues of growing concern. In recent years, the number of vacant storefronts and commercial buildings has increased, sparking concern about the potential effects those properties may have on the value, safety, and attractiveness of surrounding commercial and residential areas.

Planning for the future of the corridor should consider:

- Strategies to calm or channel traffic, especially in areas where pedestrian crossings are concentrated or where connections with residential areas may be improved;
- Retrofitting existing development to provide for safe pedestrian connections, transit access, and cross-parcel vehicular circulation;
- Assessing opportunities for the reuse or redevelopment of poorly performing commercial centers and uses;
- Creating village or neighborhood centers by encouraging mixed uses, clustering high and medium density housing and commercial uses in key locations, and improving public spaces and pedestrian accessibility;
- Encouraging design improvements to existing commercial buildings and signs; and
- Increasing the attractiveness of roadways and rights-of-way through landscaping and screening.

Neighborhood Conservation Areas

The Plan Framework Map identifies five neighborhood conservation areas. Four of the areas are traditional residential neighborhoods built generally before WWII. The fifth is somewhat younger with most houses built after 1950. These five areas are described as:

- 1. The Lower Rivermont Area.** Extending north from 3rd Street downtown, and including frontage along Rivermont and Bedford Avenues to Oakwood Court, this area includes the neighborhoods of Daniel's Hill and Rivermont, and portions of Riverside, Woodland, Oakwood, and Peakland.
- 2. The Fifth Street Area.** Extending west from Harrison Street to Morgan Street and north from 10th Street to Gatlin Street and Blackwater Creek, this area includes the neighborhoods of Garland Hill, Tinbridge Hill, College Hill, Dearington, and a portion of Miller Park.
- 3. The Twelfth Street Area.** Extending south from 14th Street between Pierce and Harrison Streets, continuing along the north side of the Expressway to Fishing Creek and east to the railroad tracks, this area centers on Twelfth Street and includes the neighborhoods of Diamond Hill and White Rock Hill.

4. The Fort Avenue Area. Extending southwest from the intersection of Fort and Campbell Avenues to New Hampshire Avenue and north from the Western Railway tracks to College Street, this area includes portions of the Miller Park, West End, and Fort Hill neighborhoods.

5. The Edgewood/Edinboro Area. Extending west from Wards Road, south from Fort Avenue, and north of the railroad tracks, this area is the youngest of all those designated and the only one not located in the traditional neighborhood areas shown on the Future Land Use Map.

Neighborhood Conservation Areas 1- 4 form the inner ring of residential development around the central business district. These neighborhoods are an extension of the Downtown with mostly traditional street layouts and excellent direct access to Downtown amenities. All of the City's six historic districts and many of the recognized historic places are found within Neighborhood Conservation Areas 1-4.

Although rich in historic and cultural fabric, these mature neighborhoods face challenges of reinvestment and rehabilitation. Some of the homes are very large wood structures over 3,000 square feet in size. The cost of rehabilitating and maintaining these large homes may deter some potential home buyers and investors. Other houses are very small, less than 1,000 square feet, and not as attractive to families as larger suburban homes. Conversion of some homes in Neighborhood Conservation Areas to rental units has resulted in their gradual deterioration. Citizens in public meetings have expressed concerns about the negative effects of poorly maintained, deteriorating, vacant, and abandoned homes within their neighborhoods. Others discussed inappropriate infill development and teardowns, where the style and size of new construction does not blend well with the architectural character of existing homes on the block. Maintaining the existing housing stock and encouraging public and private investment that supports neighborhood character is critical to neighborhood stabilization.

Neighborhood Conservation Area 5 has somewhat different issues than Areas 1-4; the primary problem being the encroachment of new commercial development from Fort Avenue and Wards Road. Multiple small lots have been purchased and houses demolished to make way for suburban style shopping centers, fast food restaurants, and other retail developments. Visual and traffic impacts have become a destabilizing force in the neighborhood.

The City plans to address the issues for Neighborhood Conservation Areas by establishing a Neighborhood Partnership, as described in Chapter 10, Neighborhoods & Housing. This partnership would bring together the City's public and private housing providers to address the housing issues identified above and to develop community-based neighborhood plans.

Neighborhood Conservation Area Plans will address such issues as the following:

- Programs to encourage the rehabilitation and renovation of older houses;
- Programs to facilitate home ownership and improve the quality of rental housing;

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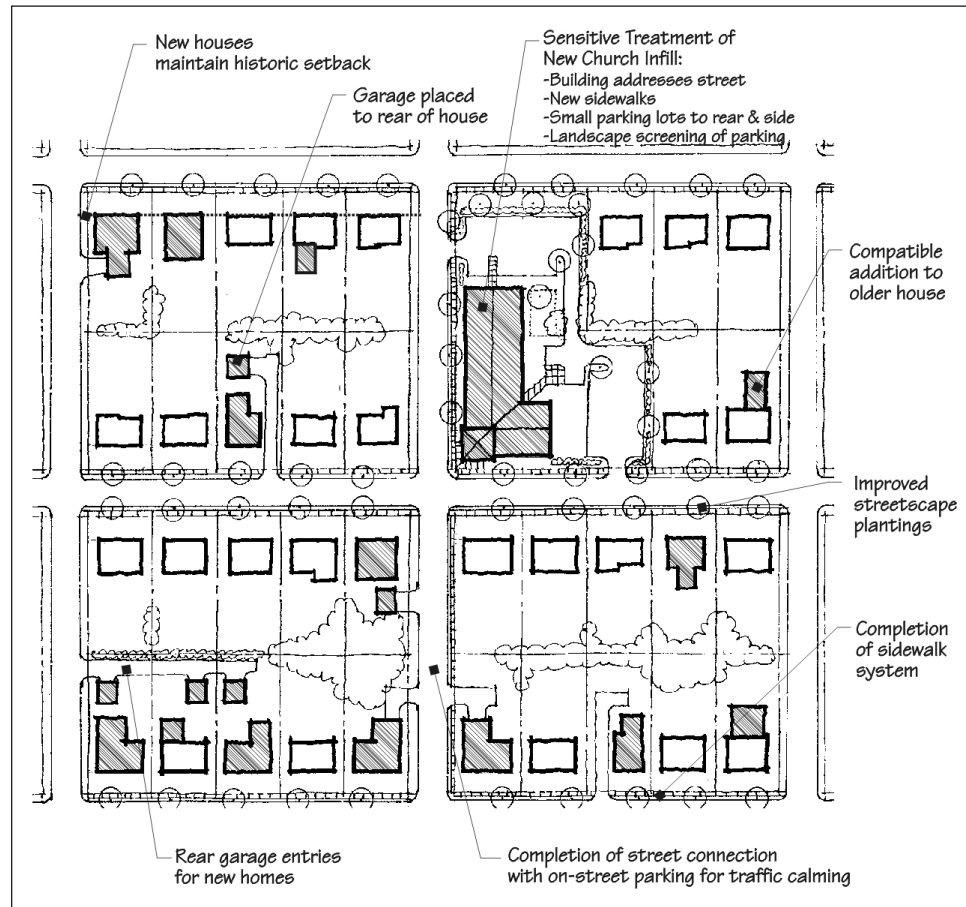
- Application of a Traditional Residential Overlay District to reduce the number of variances and conditional use permits needed to build and renovate older homes on small lots;
- Land use conflicts, including conflicts between residential areas and adjacent commercial or industrial areas and conflicts created by the expansion of public and civic uses within neighborhoods;
- Pressures to convert single family houses and lots to other uses, such as commercial uses, along major roads;
- Traffic impacts, such as commuter traffic on major through roads and industrial truck traffic;
- Infrastructure improvements, including street and sidewalk repairs, traffic calming measures, new sidewalks and trails, CSO improvements, upgraded water and sewer lines;
- Other public investments, such as street tree planting, pocket parks, and community centers;
- Maintenance of neighborhood schools;
- Safety and security issues, particularly as identified through the Community Policing Program;
- Programs to encourage the involvement of neighborhood residents in the improvement and maintenance of their neighborhoods (building leadership capacity, encouraging civic involvement); and
- Standards for public landscape, streets, and utilities in the Historic Districts to enhance their distinctive design.

General Plan Recommendations and Interim Policies for All Neighborhood Conservation Areas

Goals, objectives, and strategies to guide land use and public investment decisions for Neighborhood Conservation Areas are included in Chapter 5, Citywide Land Use & Development; in Chapter 6, Design, Character & Quality; and in Chapter 10, Neighborhoods & Housing.

The City will use the following as interim policies with regard to changes proposed in Neighborhood Conservation Areas until neighborhood plans are completed:

- The City should refrain from expanding business and industrial zoning in these areas.
- When reviewing conditional use permits for churches, institutions, and other conditional uses, the City should ensure that proposed buildings, parking lots, and other features are designed to fit into the fabric and character of these older neighborhoods. Buildings should not be so large as to overwhelm the surrounding residential scale of buildings. Parking lots should be located to the rear or side of buildings and be screened and landscaped. Lighting should not intrude into neighboring lots and streets.
- New and expanded public facilities should be designed to fit into the neighborhoods in the same way that is recommended for churches and institutions above.
- Road improvement plans must consider not only the movement of through traffic, but also the movement of vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians within these Neighborhood Conservation Areas. Road improvements should not damage or further reduce community cohesion and aesthetic qualities.
- When preparing Corridor Studies and Revitalization Area Plans, as described earlier in this chapter, the City will consider their impacts on adjacent Neighborhood Conservation Areas.



Barry Carpenter, Sympoetica

Illustrative, Rehabilitated Neighborhood Conservation Area 2002.

Planned Development Areas

The City of Lynchburg's residentially zoned areas are slowly building out. There are a limited number of large areas remaining for new residential development. It is important that these areas be well-planned and constructed so that they become assets to the City. They should offer a wide range of housing opportunities and attract new residents to the City to support its ample retail

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offerings and provide workers for new businesses. On the Plan Framework Map, these areas have been identified as Planned Development Areas. As described in this section, the City would like to see these areas develop somewhat differently from the usual suburban residential patterns.

Residential development within the City over the past 40 years has been in the form of suburban-style subdivisions, with large lots, wide streets, no sidewalks, and an unconnected and isolated street network. New residential streets typically lack a grid pattern and are instead curvilinear with cul-de-sacs that force traffic onto arterial streets. This street pattern tends to increase traffic levels on the City's major roadways because these major roads offer the only way in and out of the neighborhoods. In addition, because residential subdivisions have tended to be single-use, residents must drive to work, shop, worship and go to school. A lack of sidewalks and bicycle paths or lanes also forces more driving. Neighborhoods have become bedroom communities within their own City.

To obtain more diverse, connected, and integrated neighborhoods, the City will promote the development of Planned Development Areas according to Traditional Neighborhood Development principles, as permitted within the Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) special zoning district in the Zoning Ordinance. These TND principles are listed earlier in this chapter under the description of the Plaza / Midtown Revitalization Area.

The Planned Development Areas (PDAs) that these principles will apply to are:

- Wyndhurst Planned Development Area
- Cheese Creek Planned Development Area
- Greenview Planned Development Area
- Candler's Mountain Planned Development Area

Wyndhurst Planned Development Area

Wyndhurst is currently developing as an approved TND. When built out, it will have a mix of housing types, a commercial/employment core in the form of a "Main Street," a grid of streets and sidewalks, a YMCA, several parks, and a stream valley Resource Conservation Area.

Cheese Creek Planned Development Area

The Cheese Creek PDA is planned to develop in a pattern similar to Wyndhurst's with a mix of housing types at a maximum gross residential density of 12 dwelling units per acre. A community commercial area with a "Main Street" development character is recommended. This commercial area would also serve as a central retail area for the northwestern part of the City. Other TND principles also apply. Resource Conservation Areas within the Cheese Creek PDA should be protected.

Greenview Planned Development Area

This PDA should offer a mix of housing types at a maximum residential density of 12 dwelling units per acre. A commercial area should not be required for this PDA, but if requested, it should be small, at the neighborhood or convenience commercial scale, since there are ample commercial areas along Timberlake Road. TND principles will apply. Pedestrian/bicycle connections to Timberlake Road should be provided through medium and/or high density residential areas north of Greenview PDA and via the Resource Conservation Area shown on the Future Land Use Map.

Candlers Mountain Planned Development Area

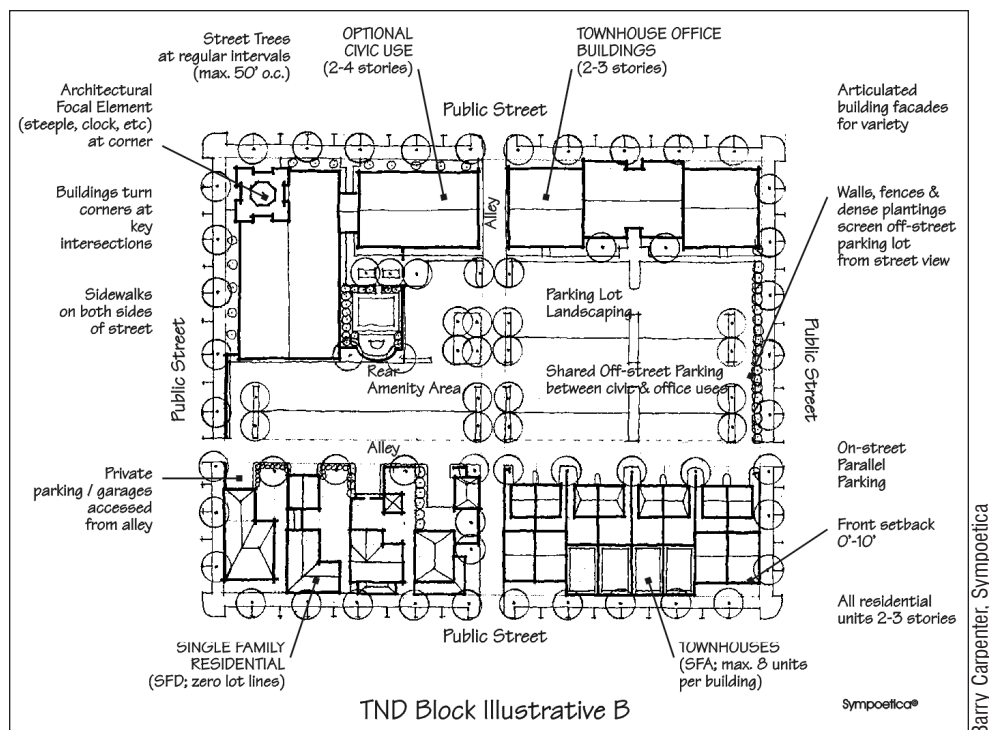
The land of this PDA is relatively steep and so the maximum gross residential density is recommended at four dwelling units per acre. This area can be developed in single family, townhouse, or multifamily forms, though special attention should be paid to designing the buildings and parking areas so as to minimize grading and tree removal to the greatest extent possible. Commercial development is not recommended here due to the large amount of retail uses already located across US Route 460. A pedestrian connection across the Candlers Mountain Road bridge is recommended. TND principles need not apply here, as the steep grades would make grid street patterns difficult to build and the environmental impacts would be high. The City supports extension of Odd Fellows Road to US Route 460 and the creation of an interchange at that intersection. The interchange will provide improved access for trucks and other vehicles to US Route 460 from Odd Fellows Road and other roads in the area. When this extension/interchange is constructed, the possibility of some commercial development around the interchange should be evaluated. However, care must be taken to ensure that any commercial development does not exacerbate stormwater runoff or other environmental problems due to the steep slopes in the area.

General Plan Recommendations for All Planned Development Areas

Goals, objectives, and strategies to guide land use decisions in Planned Development Areas are included in Chapter 5, Citywide Land Use & Development; in Chapter 6, Design, Character & Quality; and in Chapter 10, Neighborhoods & Housing.

Refer to the sample design for one block of the Mixed Use Planned Development Area on the next page.

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Sample design for one block of a Mixed Use Planned Development Area.

Business/Technology & Employment Areas

As the region's economy has expanded and diversified—balancing a reliance on heavy industry and manufacturing with a mix of technology and service industries—demand for industrial buildings and sites has changed. Once concentrated along rail lines downtown and along the river, the City's industrial uses have migrated to more suburban locations along the US 29 Bypass and the Expressway.

Several factors have influenced this shift, including access to transportation, changes in building requirements, and, to a lesser but increasingly important extent, proximity to communication infrastructure. While rail access remains important, access to the regional road network has become a central factor shaping the location of industry in the region. Easy access to the US 29/ Lynchburg Expressway and the region's arterial road network is among the most important factors affecting the location of industrial uses in the City. Airport access also has become an important factor, especially for warehousing and distribution facilities, manufacturers, and assemblers serving national and international markets.

The second driver of these locational shifts in industry relates to the evolution of manufacturing practices and the associated change in demand from multi-story buildings to single-story, open span structures with on-site parking, truck loading

facilities, and expansion potential. As demand has changed, large (10-50 acres), relatively level sites with access to sewer, water, road, rail, and communications infrastructure have increased in popularity as smaller, closer-in properties have become less attractive for industrial development

Recognizing these shifts in demand, the Plan identifies several areas of the City with the potential to support additional investment and reinvestment in industrial and technology uses.

Generally, these areas share the following characteristics:

- Existing or emerging concentrations of industrial, office, and technology uses;
- Easy access to highway and/or rail facilities;
- Remaining developable land;
- Natural buffers adjacent to existing and developing residential areas; and
- Access to public utilities and communication infrastructure.

For these areas, the Plan encourages the efficient use of developable lands, the preservation of natural buffer zones between industrial and surrounding residential uses, the discouragement of large-scale retail uses in areas better suited to industrial development, and the gradual removal of isolated residential uses within the areas. By encouraging the clustering of similar uses in these designated areas, the City seeks to preserve and expand the City's employment base, concentrate infrastructure investment, and minimize potential use conflicts. While limited commercial use may be appropriate to serve the needs of employers and employees in these areas, permitting a broad mix of uses is not recommended.

The Plan Framework Map identifies the following Business/Technology and Employment Areas in the City:

- First Lynchburg Industrial Park Employment Area
- Graves Mill Business/Technology Area
- Lynchpin Center Business/Technology Area

First Lynchburg Industrial Park Employment Area

The First Lynchburg Industrial Park Employment Area, the earliest planned industrial area outside the City's core, encompasses the existing Lynchburg Industrial Park and extends south to Candler's Mountain Road and north to the railroad tracks and Fishing Creek stream valley south of Campbell Avenue. Since its annexation, virtually the entire area has been planned and zoned for industrial use.

While natural constraints to future development exist—stream valleys, floodplains, and areas with steep slopes preclude or limit development in portions of the area—vacant lands along Mayflower Drive, John Capron Road, and Odd Fellows Road can accommodate future development. In addition, improved access provided by the planned extension of Odd Fellows Road and its interchange with US Route 460 will increase the attractiveness of this area for investment.

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While planned and zoned for industrial use at the time of annexation, the area includes pockets of residential uses north of Mayflower Drive and along Carroll Avenue. This residential use in the midst of an otherwise industrial district is inconsistent with long-standing policy discouraging the mixing of heavy industrial and residential land use. For this area, the City should continue the existing policy encouraging the gradual conversion of residential uses to industrial uses. Rezoning from industrial to commercial zoning districts for properties currently in residential use is therefore discouraged.

Graves Mill Business/Technology Area

The Graves Mill Business/Technology Area is generally centered on the intersection of Graves Mill Road, Nationwide Drive, and the Lynchburg Expressway. The area includes several industrial and office developments including large projects south of Graves Mill Road, along Nationwide Drive, and in the Tomahawk Industrial Park adjacent to the Norfolk and Western Railroad line. Smaller scale commercial and office uses exist at the interchange and along Graves Mill Road east of the Expressway. Large tracts of developable land are located east of the Expressway at the existing end of Nationwide Drive, north of Graves Mill Road west of the Expressway, and along Graves Mill Road north of Fort Avenue. The area is surrounded on all sides by stable single family neighborhoods, including the Sandusky neighborhood east of Burton Creek.

Significant changes in future land use are recommended for this area. The Plan recommends light industrial, office, and technology uses for the areas along Graves Mill Road north of Fort Avenue and north of Graves Mill Road west of the Expressway. In order to preserve this area as a location for these uses (i.e., light industrial, office, and technology), the City would like to avoid development of smaller retail establishments that could be more effectively located in other areas. An exception would be for small establishments intended to serve business and industry in the Graves Mill Area. In addition to rezoning from residential to a district or districts that permit office, light industrial, and technology uses, several infrastructure improvements and development conditions would be required to ensure quality development.

To improve access and connectivity between uses, several improvements to the local road network would be required, including the following:

- Upgrade and extend Breezewood Drive south to Graves Mill Road;
- Upgrade Graves Mill Road between Fort Avenue and the Expressway;
- Realign Old Graves Mill Road at its intersection with Graves Mill Road; and
- Realign or upgrade McConville Road to provide a more direct and effective connection between Nationwide Drive and Lakeside Drive.

In addition, concerted efforts should be made to protect sensitive natural and historic features, incorporate natural areas and trails in plans for new development,

and protect adjacent residential areas through the conservation of forested areas and stream valleys. Development of the property adjacent to Graves Mill and the early structures in close proximity to the Mill should provide sufficient buffers to minimize visual impacts on the site and its immediate surroundings.

Lynchpin Center Business/Technology Area

The Lynchpin Center Business/Technology Area is one of Lynchburg's newest business parks. It has excellent access to the Expressway and the Norfolk Southern rail line crosses the southern end of the park. A number of vacant sites are available for development. The area exhibits rolling topography with Ivy Creek running through the center. The City is currently developing the Lynchpin Nature Center and Park, which will provide a recreational outlet for workers.

Lynchpin Center is planned for manufacturing, research and development, and technology businesses. Its current industrial zoning should be retained and commercial uses, other than business service uses and accessory food service for workers, are not appropriate. The City lacks sites for employment uses, so industrially zoned sites in centers like Lynchpin must be saved for such uses.

Next to Lynchpin Center, Chapel Lane is currently partially developed in single family homes and a church, though it is zoned I-3, Heavy Industrial. The Future Land Use Map shows the eastern side of Chapel Lane planned for Medium Density Residential, thereby separating it from Lynchpin Center. The west side of Chapel Lane is planned for business/technology uses and a landscaped area to buffer the business uses from the residential uses and the church.

Access to the easternmost and northernmost portions of the industrially zoned areas of Lynchpin Center needs to be improved. New roads into these areas should be designed so as to limit truck traffic impacts on neighboring residential areas along Wiggington Road and Chapel Lane. Chapel Lane should not be used for business traffic from Lynchpin Center.

The Ivy Creek Resource Conservation Area bisects Lynchpin Center. The natural features of this stream valley should be preserved, though road crossings will required. This Resource Conservation Area offers opportunities for passive recreational use. A system of trails and sidewalks along Ivy Creek and roads should be developed to link Lynchpin Center businesses, Lynchpin Nature Park, and surrounding residential areas.

General Plan Recommendations for All Business/Technology and Employment Areas

Goals, objectives, and strategies to guide land use decisions in these areas are included in Chapter 5, Citywide Land Use & Development; in Chapter 6, Design, Character & Quality; in Chapter 7, Economic Development & Redevelopment; and in Chapter 9, Commercial and Employment Areas.

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Scenic Conservation Areas

Several major roadways in Lynchburg have scenic qualities that should be conserved. Land along them is highly visible to the residents and visitors that use these roads. The image they present sets an image for the entire City, one that the City would like to protect and enhance.

Highlighted in light green on the Plan Framework Map, Scenic Conservation Area roads include Boonsboro Road, the Lynchburg Expressway, Graves Mill Road and US Route 460 (the future US 29 Bypass). Portions of the Expressway, Boonsboro Road, and Graves Mill are already subject to the City's Scenic Corridor Overlay District, a zoning district that contains extra landscaping and buffering requirements. The other road corridors highlighted should be added to the Scenic Corridor Overlay District. In addition, the provisions of that district should be revised to enhance its effectiveness in protecting the scenic quality of these corridors.

These provisions should address the following scenic quality protection measures:

- Retention of trees
- Limits on grading
- Landscape treatment of cut and fill slopes
- Limits for the size and number of commercial signs
- Lighting standards
- Limits on curb cuts and requirements for interparcel access
- Enhanced landscaping of land developed within the viewshed of the road
- Sidewalk and bicycle land/path standards

In addition, the City plans to pursue expansion of the LEAF program, the private-sector funded right-of-way landscaping program that has been so successful along the Expressway.

General Plan Recommendations and Interim Policies for All Scenic Conservation Areas

Goals, objectives, and strategies to guide the improvement of the City's Scenic Conservation Areas are included in Chapter 6, Design, Character & Quality. Until the Scenic Corridor Overlay District provisions are amended, the City will use the following as interim policies with regard to changes proposed in Scenic Conservation Areas:

- If a property is proposed for rezoning within a Scenic Conservation Area, the City will seek proffers that ensure the high aesthetic quality of development that addresses the scenic quality protection measures listed above.
- If a conditional use is proposed within a Scenic Conservation Area, the City will impose conditions to ensure high aesthetic quality for the proposed use or development that addresses the scenic quality protection measures listed above.

- During the review of site plans, the City will suggest design changes that enhance the aesthetic quality of development proposed within Scenic Conservation Areas.
- Public projects will be designed to enhance Scenic Conservation Areas. When VDOT plans road improvement projects, the City will seek assistance in obtaining landscape improvements like those used in the LEAF Program.
- When preparing Corridor Studies, as described earlier in this chapter, the City will consider design measures to protect Scenic Conservation Areas.



An area in the Scenic Corridor Overlay District landscaped by the LEAF Program.



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